



NEWS RELEASE

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Lack of Rain in August Lowers Expectations for Grain Crops

Lack of rain in August has lowered expectations among grain producers in Maryland and Delaware for this year's corn and soybean crops. According to a survey released Friday by USDA's National Agricultural Statistics Service and based on September 1 crop conditions, yields for corn and soybeans are now projected to be nearly five bushels per acre lower than were projected August 1. The survey concluded just before Tropical Storm Hanna brought several inches of rain to the region. The impact of the storm is not yet known, however, it is hoped that the much needed rain may benefit late planted soybeans. Growers will be surveyed again the week of October 1.

Maryland: Maryland farmers now expect to harvest an average 126 bushels per acre of corn this year, down four bushels per acre from last month, but an improvement over the 103 bushels per acre harvested last year after a severe summer drought. With 410,000 acres of corn expected to be harvested, production is projected to be 51.7 million bushels. Growers are also expected to harvest 460,000 acres of soybeans at an average yield of 29 bushels per acre. The projected yield for soybeans is down five bushels per acre from last month, and is just slightly better than the average 27 bushels per acre harvested last year.

Delaware: Delaware farmers are now projecting an average yield of 120 bushels per acre for corn this year, down five bushels per acre from last month. Although a disappointment, this compares favorably with last year's crop, when growers averaged only 97 bushels per acre after a severe summer drought. With 152,000 acres of corn expected to be harvested, production is projected at 18.2 million bushels. Projected yield for soybeans is also down from last month. Delaware farmers also expect to harvest 28 bushels per acre of soybeans, down five bushels per acre from last month, but slightly better than last year's average yield of 24 bushels per acre. With 182,000 acres of soybeans expected to be harvested, production is projected to be 5.1 million bushels.

United States: Corn production is forecast at 12.1 billion bushels, down 2 percent from last month and 8 percent below 2007. Based on conditions as of September 1, yields are expected to average 152.3 bushels per acre, down 2.7 bushels from August but 1.2 bushels above last year. If realized, yield will be the second highest on record, behind 2004, while production will be the second largest, behind last year. Yield forecasts are lower than last month across the northern and eastern Corn Belt and the Ohio and Tennessee Valleys where the lack of rainfall during August reduced soil moisture supplies and stressed the crop. Yield prospects also decreased across much of the middle Mississippi Valley and adjacent areas of the Great Plains as dry weather during August eliminated soil moisture surpluses.

Soybean production is forecast at 2.93 billion bushels, down 1 percent from the August forecast but up 13 percent from last year. If realized, this will be the fourth largest production on record. Based on September 1 conditions, yields are expected to average 40.0 bushels per acre, down 0.5 bushel from last month and down 1.2 bushels from 2007. Compared with last month, yields are forecast lower or unchanged in the mid-Atlantic States, the central and eastern Corn Belt, Louisiana, Nebraska, and South Dakota. Yields increased or are unchanged from the August 1 forecast across the Southeast and the remainder of the Great Plains. Area for harvest in the U.S. is forecast at 73.3 million acres, unchanged from last month but up 17 percent from 2007.

ACREAGE, YIELD AND PRODUCTION 2007 AND 2008

Commodity	Unit	Planted		Harvested		Average Yield		Production	
		2007	2008	2007	2008	2007	2008	2007	2008
Maryland									
		1,000 Acres						1,000	
Corn ¹	ACR	540	480	----	----	----	----	----	----
Corn, Grain	BU	----	----	455	410	103	126	46,865	51,660
Corn, Silage	TON	----	----	75	----	12	----	900	----
Soybeans ¹	BU	400	470	380	460	27	29	10,260	13,340
Wheat, Winter	BU	220	255	170	215	68	77	11,560	16,555
Barley ¹	BU	45	50	34	45	84	90	2,856	4,050
Hay, All	TON	----	----	215	205	2.15	----	462	----
Hay, Alfalfa	TON	----	----	40	45	2.80	----	112	----
Hay, Other	TON	----	----	175	160	2.00	----	350	----
Apples	LBS	----	----	----	----	----	----	33,000	26,000
Peaches	TON	----	----	----	----	----	----	3.3	4.3
Potatoes, Summer	CWT	3.0	2.7	3.0	2.7	320	290	960	783
Delaware									
Corn ¹	ACR	195	160	----	----	----	----	----	----
Corn, Grain	BU	----	----	185	152	97	120	17,945	18,240
Corn, Silage	TON	----	----	7	----	10	----	70	----
Soybeans ¹	BU	150	185	145	182	24	28	3,480	5,096
Wheat, Winter	BU	57	80	55	78	68	76	3,740	5,928
Barley ¹	BU	21	25	19	22	78	90	1,482	1,980
Hay, All	TON	----	----	15	15	1.93	----	29	----
Hay, Alfalfa	TON	----	----	5	5	2.20	----	11	----
Hay, Other	TON	----	----	10	10	1.8	----	18	----
Potatoes, Summer	CWT	2.0	1.9	2.0	1.9	270	250	540	475
United States									
		1,000,000							
Corn ¹	ACR	93,600	86,977	----	----	----	----	----	----
Corn, Grain	BU	----	----	86,542	79,290	151	152	13,074	12,072
Corn, Silage	TON	----	----	6,071	----	18	----	106	----
Soybeans ¹	BU	63,631	74,783	62,820	73,341	41	40	2,585	2,934
Wheat, Winter	BU	44,987	46,605	35,952	40,252	42	47	1,516	1,875
Barley ¹	BU	4,020	4,130	3,508	3,640	60	60	212	218
All Hay	TON	----	----	61,625	60,439	2.44	2.45	150	148
Hay, Alfalfa	TON	----	----	21,670	20,778	3.35	3.41	73	71
Hay, Other	TON	----	----	39,955	39,661	1.95	1.94	78	77
Apples	LBS	----	----	----	----	----	----	9,114	9,165
Peaches	TON	----	----	----	----	----	----	1.13	1.10
Potatoes, Summer	CWT	53.7	48.5	51.2	46.2	332	324	17.0	14.9

¹ Acres planted for all purposes.